



Spring Sunday School Quarter

March – May 2023

Session 1-6: My Encounter with Jesus

Session 7-12: Dealing with Temptation

Session 13: Special – Avoiding a Critical Spirit

Pathway of Discipleship Plan

8 Markers of Discipleship	FALL 2022	WINTER 2022-23	SPRING 2023	SUMMER 2023
SERVE GOD AND OTHERS	James: Living Out Your Faith			
ENGAGE WITH SCRIPTURE	How to Build Your Life on God's Word			
EXERCISE FAITH		Putting Fear in its Place		
SEEK GOD		How to Discern the Voice of God		
SHARE CHRIST			My Encounter with Jesus	
OBEY GOD AND DENY SELF			Dealing with Temptation	
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS				How to Disciple Others
LIVE UNASHAMED				Holy Living

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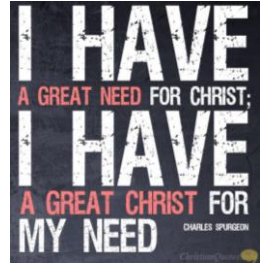
Session 13: Special Focus – Avoiding a Critical Spirit

- ❖ May 28, pg.28 Avoiding a Critical Spirit

March 5, 2023

Jesus Met My Greatest Need

Scripture Study: John 4:7-18, 25-26



Many of you know my son, Luke, is a runner. He runs for sport, he runs for exercise, he runs for FUN (We don't know where he got it?). Over time he has learned what things are key to good performance in running. Good shoes are a must. Being diligent in running frequently, eating the right foods, getting proper amounts of rest, among other things are very influential in his times on the track, cross country course, or in a marathon. But, he has learned that, above all other things, drinking adequate amounts of water and other things that hydrate the body is an irreplaceable component in having a good running experience.

Our bodies are quite sensitive to the critical components for our performance. How much more sensitive we should be; body, mind, soul, and spirit; for the living water that we can only get from Jesus.

Context: This is a well-known narrative from the life of Jesus. There was much racial tension between the Jews and the people of Samaria. Many Jews would bypass Samaria in their travels even if it increased the distance significantly. Also noteworthy, the previous passage tells that it is the 6th hour (noon) when the woman comes to the well. This is significant because it was customary for women to come to the well early in the morning to avoid the heat of the day. Many believe the woman did this to avoid the scorn of other women for her indiscretions. Lastly, it is significant that Jesus is even talking to the woman because of the ethnic and gender divide. Jewish men certainly did not speak to Samaritan women. His disciples are shocked at this reality.

Today's Focus: Understanding that only Jesus can satisfy our spiritual thirst is the first step in finding true satisfaction in life.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – John 4:7-14

Why was the Samaritan woman so quick to point out the differences between herself and Jesus? _____

Fill in the blanks:

“Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst _____; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall _____ thirst; but the _____ that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.” (13-14)

What exactly does Jesus mean when He says that when we drink of His water we shall never thirst again? _____

Read – John 4:15-18

Answer Yes or No to the following based on this passage:

- Jesus offers the woman literal water. Yes / No
- Jesus knows about the woman’s past. Yes / No
- Jesus casts the woman aside for her mistakes. Yes / No

Read – John 4:25-26

What does it mean to know things about the Messiah without knowing Him personally? _____

The woman says that one day the messiah will come and reveal truth to the people. Do we ever use that as an excuse to not pursue a relationship with Jesus in the present? Why? _____

Today’s Takeaway: God sometimes confronts our bad ideas or attitudes in order to lead us a more satisfying relationship with Him.

Study Notes and Prayer Reminders:



March 12, 2023

Jesus Restored My Life

Scripture Study: John 5:2-11, 19-21

Time and time again I have heard the story of how Jesus intervened in a person's life to work in ways of healing

that are beyond human ability or comprehension. Upon hearing the grim realities of a recent cancer diagnosis or upon learning that someone had lost their job and the mortgage payment was due or, maybe most significantly, to hear of someone who had slipped so far into the clutch of sin that there seemed to be no hope it is easy to think of our circumstances as being hopeless. However, Jesus is able to restore what is broken in our lives. In fact, He is the only one who is able to truly heal any and every broken part of our lives.

Context: In last week's lesson we saw Jesus and His disciples at Jacob's well in His meeting with the Samaritan woman. Jesus continues His tour of miracles on route to Jerusalem. Upon His arrival He finds a man who joins a "multitude" of others who hope to get into the healing waters of the Pool of Bethesda.

Today's Focus: Understanding Jesus' power over every aspect of our lives and learning to turn to Him for healing and restoration.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – John 5:2-7

In today's text we see those with physical disabilities gathered at the pool. Does Jesus have power over other types of brokenness? Make a list of other kinds of brokenness that might need Jesus' healing touch.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to ask the man if he wished to get well?

Read – John 5:8-11

Picking up a pallet and walking with it was considered work and work was prohibited by the Jews on the Sabbath. Read Mark 2:27. Is there ever a wrong time to do a right thing? _____

Why do you suppose rules like this existed in the first place? Who made this rule, God or man? (Read Exodus 20:8 before answering). _____

Read – John 5:19-21

Were the Pharisees more concerned with rules being kept or with people being well? Do you ever see these tendencies in people today?

There are a few examples in the Old Testament of God raising people from the dead (ie. 1Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:32-37). But, Jesus performs many miracles in His earthly ministry. Why do you suppose Jesus performed so many miracles? _____

What future “greater works than these” is Jesus speaking of? _____

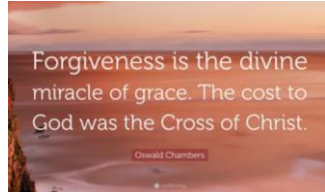
Today’s Takeaway: Jesus is willing and able to restore broken lives.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

March 19, 2023

Jesus Gave Me Grace & Forgiveness

Scripture Study: John 8:2-11



Most of us would agree that forgiveness is one of the most desirable, but difficult actions a person could aspire to. In his book, *Experiencing God's Forgiveness*, Luis Palau, tells the story of Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, and the intentionality she exhibited in the act of forgiveness.

Barton, "was reminded one day of a vicious deed that someone had done to her years before. But she acted as if she had never even heard of the incident. "Don't you remember it? Her friend asked. "No," came Barton's reply, "I distinctly remember forgetting it."

Forgiveness is something that God desires for us to be actively pursuing with those around us and with Himself. It can seem far from us, but with God's help and a willing heart, we can forgive like Jesus does.

Context: The crime of adultery was punishable unto death by stoning according to Mosaic law. However, the law required that both the man and woman caught in adultery be put to death (Lev. 10:20, Deut. 22:22-24). However, the adulteress man is not present. Jesus does not say whether the woman was guilty or not, but His issue is with the way in which she is being judged. Jesus understood that this was an attempt by the Pharisees to trick Him. If Jesus refuses the death penalty then the Pharisees would accuse Him of heresy against God's law. However, if Jesus confirms the accusation of the Pharisees then He would lose His reputation of compassion. Jesus always sees things rightly.

Today's Focus: Jesus models the right attitude of forgiveness.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – John 8:2-6a

Based solely on what you read in verses 2-6a, how would you describe the attitude of the Pharisees? Circle all that apply:

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------|----------|------------|
| Self-righteous | Mean | Generous | Reserved |
| Compassionate | Kind | Gentle | Accusatory |
| Patient | Honest | Devious | Helpful |

At the end of verse 4 the Pharisees say the woman was caught “in the very act” of adultery. If this is true, why isn’t the man present? Why do you think they included this phrase? _____

Read – John 8:6b-9

Why do you suppose Jesus said, “He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.”? Read Matthew 7:1-4

Is Jesus focusing on the woman’s guilt or on the qualifications of her accusers to judge her? Why is that important? _____

Being honest with yourself, how would you rate your current willingness to forgive someone who has wronged you in the past?

Very Willing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not willing

Read – John 8:10-11

Complete Jesus’ words in verse 11: “I do not _____ you either. Go. From now on _____ no _____”

What do you imagine Jesus was writing on the ground? _____

Today’s Takeaway: Jesus’ sinlessness qualifies Him to judge us, whereas His love and compassion qualifies Him to forgive us.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

March 26, 2023

Jesus Opened my Eyes to the Truth

Scripture Study: John 9:1-7, 32-33, 35-38



I recently had a conversation with a woman who is familiar with the deaf community and had been formally trained in sign language.. As our conversation went on, we shared stories we had both seen online about people who were born deaf, but had cochlear implants installed. Cochlear implants are a medical device that restores the ability to perceive sounds and understand speech for some people. It is amazing and heartwarming to see people’s response when the doctors turn the devices on for the first time! Can you imagine having never heard a sound to then suddenly hearing the voice of a loved one for the first time? Or, what about hearing a beautiful piece of music or the sound of your child’s cry for the very first time? When we are introduced to precious things for the first time, they are powerful and lifegiving.

Context: The book of John continues to wind through the narrative of Jesus’ earthly ministry. A pattern has formed, over and again Jesus introduces His hearers to a truth that challenges previous ways of thinking. Each time He does this it evokes two responses. For some, it sets them free from old habits or misunderstandings, but for others it brings anger and bitterness.

Today’s Focus: Jesus speaks truth that opens our eyes and sets us free.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – John 9:1-7

Why do you suppose the disciples asked Jesus whose sin was to blame for the man’s blindness? (Read Exodus 20:5 & 34:7) _____

Can you name a time when you assumed that a person was experiencing difficulties due to their previous behavior? _____

How do you feel about God using circumstances in our lives to show His power? Is this feeling limited to negative circumstances? _____

Read – John 9:32-33

Circle any of the words that indicate a way that God reveals His power.

Testimony Miracles Myths Sin Bible
Ouija Boards Weather Creation Healing Faith

Keeping the Scriptures in mind, what power does Satan have to do things that may bring attention to himself? _____

Read – John 9:35-38

Does Jesus have to do miraculous things for us to believe that He is of God? (Read John 20:20-29) Why does it matter? _____

Jesus had healed the man’s physical blindness, but he still struggles with S _____ L blindness.

Complete verse 38:

“And he said, “Lord, I _____.” And he _____ Him.”

Today’s Takeaway: God often uses our most difficult circumstances to reveal His power in our lives.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

April 2, 2023

Jesus Died for Me

Scripture Study: John
19:16-19, 28-30, 38-42

Most of my adult life I
have driven pickup trucks.

But, while commuting a

longer distance I made the change to a more fuel efficient sedan.

However, a couple years ago my wife purchased me a new truck for my birthday! Best birthday gift ever! It even came with an accompanying payment book! It took some time to adjust to the different perspective the truck provided, however. No matter how I adjusted the mirrors, I couldn't quite see cars in other lanes if they were in a certain spot. I had a blind spot.

Sometimes we have blind spots in other parts of our lives too.

Essentially, a blind spot is an area that we are blinded to, an area that we just can't quite see correctly.

Context: Throughout the public ministry of Jesus, the Pharisees tried to trap Him. Being unable to trick Him into saying something that would incriminate Him, they lied to Pontius Pilate, the Governor, about what kind of kingdom He sought to bring about. Jesus is arrested then brought to trial during the night. Not knowing a way to free Jesus without an uprising, Pilate succumbs to the pressures of the Jews and sentences Jesus to crucifixion.

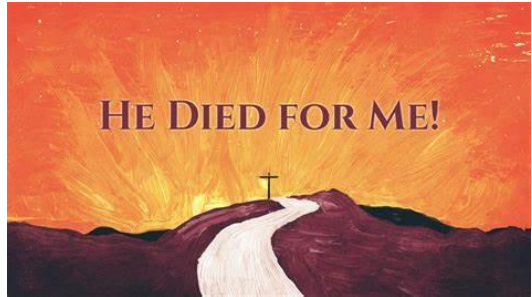
Today's Focus: Understanding the spiritual work of the cross of Christ.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – John 19:16-19

Match:

Pontius Pilate	Embalming spices
Judas Iscariot	Provided a tomb for Jesus
Herod	Used for Jesus' thirst
Hyssop	A Pharisee follower of Jesus
Joseph of Arimathea	Said, "What is truth?"
Nicodemus	Ruler of Galilee
Myrrh and aloes	Provided the myrrh and aloes



Read – John 19:28-30

What does verse 28 mean when it says “knowing all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture”? _____

Complete these crucifixion prophecies:

- ❖ “For _____ have surrounded me...” – Ps 22:16
- ❖ “They _____ my garments among them” – Ps 22:18
- ❖ “Like a lamb that is led to _____...” – Isaiah 53:7
- ❖ “For You will not _____ my soul to Sheol” – Ps 16:10
- ❖ “Even my close friend... has lifted up his _____ against me” – Ps 41:9

Read – John 19:38-42

Why would Joseph of Arimathea fear the Jews? _____

Have you ever feared someone because of your testimony of faith in Jesus? _____

Was Nicodemus a _____ . A) Blind man

Read John 3:1-2

- B) Apostle
- C) Pharisee
- D) Temple Guard

Did Joseph and Nicodemus finish the embalming process or was there more to do? Why? (Read John 19:42; Mark 16:1) _____

Today’s Takeaway: Jesus perfectly finished the work of salvation on the Cross of Calvary!

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

JESUS DIED AND
AROSE TO GIVE
US A FRUITFUL
LIFE – NOT A
FRUITLESS ONE!

April 9, 2023

Jesus Rose Again to Give Me Life

Scripture Study: John 20:1-2, 11-18

I am sure that we would all agree that death is the strongest of all human experiences. The bonds that form between human beings through the course of life, regardless how long or short, mark our very souls. Feelings of loss and grief are of such strength that we don't know how to think or act when faced with death. I've come to appreciate the idea that we all grieve differently. Some grieve outwardly, others hold it all in. Some gain a new sense of urgency to live and others isolate themselves in sadness. Regardless of the differences in the way we grieve, it leaves an indelible mark.

Context: It's likely the most familiar scene of the entire Bible. Jesus was arrested, illegally tried, and ultimately crucified on Friday. Our text begins early on Sunday morning when Mary approaches the tomb that Jesus was laid in. The prophets and Jesus Himself predicted His resurrection, but that seems far from the minds of His disciples now.

Today's Focus:

Understanding the importance of Jesus' resurrection in our lives.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – John 20:1-2

What feelings do you think Jesus' disciples might have been experiencing when hearing that His tomb was empty?

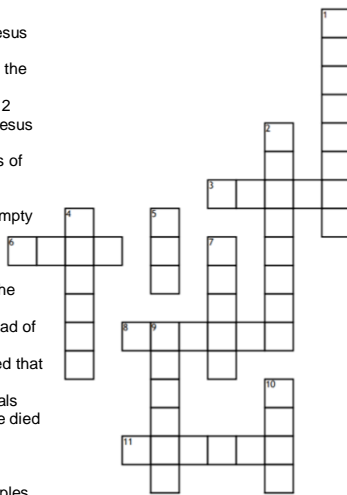
Disbelief Shock
Confusion Joy
Anger Frustration
Thrill Doubt Jubilation

Across

- The number of nights Jesus was in the tomb.
- The disciple who was at the cross.
- The village to which the 2 men were heading when Jesus joined them
- Who washed his hands of Jesus
- According to Luke, the disciple who entered the empty tomb first

Down

- Jewish Celebration for the Last Supper
- Who was released instead of Jesus
- The disciple who doubted that Jesus was alive
- The number of illegal trials Jesus underwent before he died
- Betrayed Jesus
- Time of day Jesus was resurrected
- Number of Jesus' disciples



What reasons might exist for God allowing Mary and the other women to first hear the news of Jesus' resurrection rather than the Disciples?

Read – John 20:11-16

What can we learn about Jesus when we consider the tender way in which the resurrected Jesus interacted with Mary? _____

At what point did Mary realize that it was Jesus standing before her?

Read – John 20:17-18

Why did Mary respond with spontaneous worship of Jesus? _____

Can you name a time when you responded to Jesus in unplanned worship? What happened that caused you to worship in that ecstatic, unplanned way? _____

Jesus indicates a sense of urgency for Mary to relay the message to His Disciples. Why? _____

Jesus' ministry didn't end with death, or even with His resurrection, but His ascension. What is important about that? What does that also mean for all of those who have believed on Him for salvation? _____

Today's Takeaway: Jesus' resurrection and ascension reveals His power and seals the victory over sin and death for every Christian.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

April 16, 2023

The Source of Temptation

Scripture Study: James 1:13-18



After years of saying, ‘no’, our family made the move to become pet owners. I have many humorous stories about our adventures with Cooper, the Poodle/Bichon mix addition to our family. We’ve worked diligently at training him to observe certain boundaries in our home. But, just like with us, he is often tempted to cross over certain boundary lines. Most recently, despite having a bowl full of his own food, he nuzzles his snout under my arm while our family is at the dinner table and his freakishly long tongue will extend in an attempt to wrap around any obstructions so that he can get to the food on the table. He knows the boundaries, but the temptation to go beyond them is strong, and often his will power is weak. Sound familiar?

Context: The Book of James is sometimes referred to as the “Proverbs of the New Testament” because of its brief teachings on practical matters in the Christian life. Chapter one focuses on understanding that temptation does not come from God.

Today’s Focus: Understanding that temptation doesn’t come from God.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – James 1:13

If temptation does not come from God, where does it come from?

Does Satan have a plan for temptation? What is it? _____

Could we say that God is holy and good if He were to tempt us to sin?

Sometimes we say things like, “I know God is testing me to see if _____.” How does verse 13 confront that line of thinking?

Read – James 1:14-15

Complete verse 14 – “But each one is _____ when he is carried away and enticed by his own _____.”

Match each word with the corresponding action:

- | | |
|--------|--------------|
| Lust | Accomplished |
| Sin | Enticed |
| Person | Conceived |
| Sin | Tempted |
| Lust | Birth |

The passage implies that lust is already within a person, but is waiting for an opportunity to come out. Describe that in your own words.

Read – James 1:16-18

James says every good thing is from above. Who would Satan like you to believe is the source for good things? _____

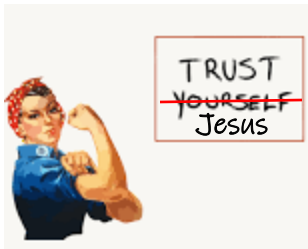
If good things come from above, where, by deductive reasoning, do bad things come from? _____

Why was it important for James to point out that there is “no variation or shifting shadow” in the Father? _____

Can you name anyone else that never changes? _____

Today’s Takeaway: God is holy, therefore He will never tempt us. Temptation and lust come from our own hearts

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:



April 23, 2023

The Temptation to Rely on Myself Instead of God

Scripture Study: Deuteronomy 8:2-10;
Matthew 4:1-4

New Years is just passed. No doubt many resolutions have already failed. Clearly there is something in the human spirit that wants to be something “better”, but we have a propensity for looking for “better” in all the wrong places. How many have home exercise equipment that are used to hang clothes on? Gym memberships that go unused? Amazon purchases that seemed like a must-have, but didn’t bring the gratification they were supposed to? We are often fooled into schemes that promise to bring quick, easy satisfaction, but in the end only Jesus can satisfy our deepest yearnings.

Context: In Matthew 4 Jesus is spending 40 days praying and fasting in the wilderness prior to His baptism. He is approached by Satan and tempted to deny His position and calling. He uses the Word of God, primarily from the Book of Deuteronomy, to cast off the Devil.

Today’s Focus: Learning to depend on God for everything we need.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – Matthew 4:1-4

Last week we determined that temptation doesn’t come from God (Jas. 1:13). Who then is the source of temptation? Choose all that apply:

- A) Satan B) Lucifer C) The Devil D) Father of Lies E) Belial

Why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into “the wilderness to be tempted by the devil”? _____

Temptation doesn’t come from God, but God may allow it for His divine purposes. TRUE / FALSE

Why do you suppose “the tempter” came to Jesus after 40 days of fasting? _____

When do you feel strongest in resisting temptation to sin? _____

What makes you feel weak to temptation? _____

Read – Deuteronomy 8:2-5

Read verses 2-3 – What was God’s purpose in leading Israel into the wilderness for 40 years?

- A) To harden them
- B) To deprive them
- C) To humble them
- D) To be mean to them

Complete V5 – *“Thus you are to _____ in your heart that the Lord your God was _____ you just as a man disciplines his _____.”*

Read – Deuteronomy 8:6-10

God was humbling Israel. What does temptation have to do with humility? _____

List all the things God will give them in the new land (V7-9):

Wheat and _____ Vines and figs and _____
Brooks of _____ Stones of _____ and hills with _____
Olive oil and _____

As you evaluate your life, what would you include in the list of things that God has given you? _____

Today’s Takeaway: Life is better when we realize we must depend on God to supply our needs rather than ourselves.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

April 30, 2023

The Temptation to Test God

Scripture Study: Deuteronomy
6:16-25; Matthew 4:5-7

In my younger days I took baseball pretty seriously. One year my parents bought me the “Baseball Fact Book”. We went on a vacation out west and I read and reread that book during the long drive until I nearly memorized every player’s statistics. I thoroughly enjoyed studying, watching, and playing baseball. Through the years I learned just how superstitious baseball people can be. If a baseball player puts his uniform on in a certain order one day and plays exceptionally well, he will continue to put his uniform on in that order until something changes. If a fan purchases a bag of popcorn at the game and his team loses that day then the fan will never purchase a bag of popcorn on a game day again! But, often Christians are a bit superstitious too, sadly. We look for signs in the clouds (or anywhere else), hoping to find a hack to the game of life. But, there are no hacks to the game of life. We have to live it the way God tells us to with no shortcuts.



Context: In Matthew 4 Jesus is spending 40 days praying and fasting in the wilderness prior to His baptism. He is approached by Satan and tempted to deny His position and calling. He uses the Word of God, primarily from the Book of Deuteronomy, to cast off the Devil.

Today’s Focus: Learning to trust God with the details of our lives rather than trying to decode Him.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – Matthew 4:5-7

Complete Matthew 4:7 -- Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, ____
____, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’ ”

What does it mean to “... not put the Lord your God to the test.”?

Can you think of an example of when you have tested God rather than trust Him at His word? _____

Read – Deuteronomy 6:16-19

Match:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| a) Massah | Created emissaries of God |
| b) Temple Mount | Between temple & Mt of Olives |
| c) Kidron Valley | Place of Bondage |
| d) Angels | City of sinful testing |
| e) Egypt | Southeast corner of temple |

Why does Jesus repeatedly use the phrase “It is written” to rebuff the devil? _____

Read – Deuteronomy 6:20-25

Define:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Judgments | Divine recourse over sins |
| 2. Pharaoh | A divine rule to observe strictly |
| 3. Statutes | Miracles & remarkable events |
| 4. Testimony | A self-revelation of God |
| 5. Signs and wonders | A law or decree made by God |
| 6. Commandment | Ruler of ancient Egypt |

How are you working to pass on God’s ways to the next generation? _____

Today’s Takeaway: When we trust God and His ways we lead lives that are faithful and God-honoring.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:



May 7, 2023

The Temptation to Place Something Else Before God

Scripture Study: Deuteronomy 6:10-15; Matthew 4:8-11

You've probably noticed that we live in a society that is self-loving. There's a certain amount of confidence that is attractive and reassuring, but we've gone beyond that. Make your rounds through Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and you'll see that self-flattery and self-exaltation is the topic of the day, every day.

If social media isn't your thing, but sports are, consider the fact that the most popular sports in America are team sports, with football arguably at the top. Yet, virtually every play is followed by an exhibition of self-aggrandizement rather than recognizing the importance of teamwork. Recently, Tyler Lockett, wide-receiver for the Seattle Seahawks had an epiphany teamwork in a post-game interview when alluding to a former teammate when he said, "It's amazing what you can accomplish when nobody cares who gets the credit..."

Context: In Matthew 4 Jesus is spending 40 days praying and fasting in the wilderness prior to His baptism. He is approached by Satan and tempted to deny His position and calling. He uses the Word of God, primarily from the Book of Deuteronomy, to cast off the Devil.

Today's Focus: Gaining a proper understanding of God's rightful position and priority in our lives.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – Matthew 4:8-11

Circle those you see being emphasized in an unhealthy way in society:

God	Family	Pleasure	Others
Self	Social Media	Notoriety	Community
Health	Prayer	Wealth	Career

Complete Jesus' words from Matthew 4:10 – "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL _____ THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND _____ HIM _____.'"

Why do you suppose that Jesus waited until the end of the time of fasting and temptation to request angelic help? _____

Read – Deuteronomy 6:10-12

List the things from verses 10-11 that the Israelites **DID NOT** do:

“_____ you did not build”

“_____ you did not fill”

“_____ you did not dig”

“_____ you did not plant”

Read – Deuteronomy 6:13-15

In this passage there are two things we are told about God that we often misunderstand: that we are to fear Him, and that He is jealous.

Write out your thoughts about each of these below.

God is a jealous God (Exodus 20:4-5): _____

We are to fear the Lord (Ecclesiastes 12:13; Proverbs 1:7): _____

How do the concepts of having a healthy fear of the Lord and having an unhealthy love of self? _____

Today's Takeaway: Life is most satisfying when we are making much of God and His glory.

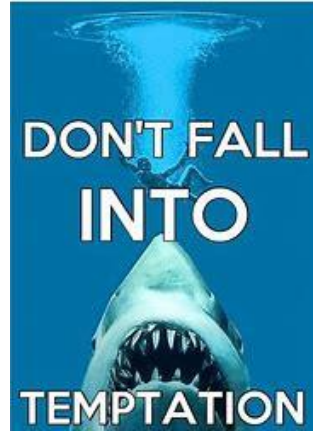
Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

May 14, 2023

Recovering From a Fall into Temptation

Scripture Study: Psalm 32:1-7

A church we served previously met in an old, rather run down building that was beyond repair. Not long after we came to that church the congregation agreed to purchase an empty church building not far away. Given the poor condition of the original building, the new building was a dream come true. A more modern facility, it was single level, more parking, again a dream come true... Until we began the process of preparing to move into the new building. Beyond the normal items like repainting the walls and cleaning things up, more expensive maintenance issues began to become known. Poor insulation in the attic; a damp, leaky basement; bad wiring in the electrical panels; on and on and on it went. Were the problems new? No. But, they were overlooked during the congregation's examination because the perspective was wrong. If only we could see through walls! However, God sees what no one else can because His perspective is perfect.



Context: It's assumed that David wrote this Psalm following his affair with Bathsheba. Whereas Psalm 51 focuses on David's sin nature, contrition, and God's process of atonement, Psalm 32 focuses on God's attitude toward sin and His forgiveness for all those who approach Him for help and forgiveness.

Today's Focus: Sin sneaks up and surprises us, but God sees it perfectly and victoriously forgives all those who sincerely seek His help.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – Psalm 32:1-2

We might initially think that the words *transgression*, *sin*, and *iniquity* are words that can be interchanged, but David uses them all here in the same breath so he intends each of them to mean something different. Complete these definitions from Vines Bible Dictionary:

Transgression – To overstep the L _ _ _ _ _

Sin – Missing the M _____

Iniquity – An OFF _____ E against God’s law

Given the different meanings of each of these three words, can you identify how David committed each of them in his affair with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11)? _____

Read – Psalm 32:3-5

David reports that his whole being was affected by guilt. Use David’s own words in verses 3-4 to describe the affect in the following realms:

Physical: _____

Emotional: _____

Spiritual: _____

Read – Psalm 32:6-7

Use the list of words to complete the statements below:

- David attempted to _____ his sin but became _____ from guilt
 - God _____ David’s sin
 - We are _____ to pray
 - God will _____ us from trouble
- And surround us with _____

<i>protect</i>
<i>encouraged</i>
<i>deliverance</i>
<i>miserable</i>
<i>conceal</i>
<i>forgave</i>

Can you think of a time in your life when you attempted to hide sin rather than take it to God for forgiveness and restoration? _____

Today’s Takeaway: When we attempt to cover up our sin, we rob ourselves of the deliverance that comes from God covering it with forgiveness and protecting us from future harm.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:



May 21, 2023

The Strength to Stand Against Temptation

Scripture Study: Ephesians 6:10-18

I heard on this morning's news that Germany and the United States were sending tanks to the Ukrainian army to use in their fight against the Russian invaders. Ukraine requested tanks from these nations because it is understood that they have the most highly effective, state of the art battle tanks in the entire world. The newscast continued to say that it would take several months for the Ukrainians to be able to use them in combat due to the immense learning curve. Sophisticated technology, different language, unfamiliar equipment, on and on the difficulties go. They are incredible weapons of war, but they are only useful when you possess them and when you know how to use them. So it is with the spiritual armor that God makes available to every Christian.

Context: The book of Ephesians is divided into equal halves. The first three chapters are richly theological, they tell us the nature of God and how the plan of salvation by the works of Jesus works. The last three chapters Paul uses to give practical application to the truths presented in chapters 1-3. It is no coincidence that the last chapter is devoted to God's design for the family unit then immediately followed by a how-to manual for the Armor of God.

Today's Focus: Learning how to use the weapons that God has given us to fight spiritual warfare.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – Ephesians 6:10-13

This passage begins with an admonition to “be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength.” – When trouble comes, where do you instinctively turn to for strength? _____

Two times in these verses alone Paul refers to the armor as the “**full** armor of God”. What might happen if we attempted to fight spiritual warfare with only select pieces of the armor of God? _____

Paul says about taking our spiritual stand against evil -- “having prepared everything”. At this moment in time, have you “prepared everything”? Describe -- _____

Read – Ephesians 6:14-16

PRAYER, HELMET, SHIELD, BIBLE,
SHOES, SWORD, SPIRIT, PEACE,
TRUTH, BREASTPLATE, FAITH, BELT

Complete the pieces of spiritual armor:

- ✓ The _____ of truth
- ✓ The _____ of righteousness
- ✓ Feet sandaled with _____
- ✓ The shield of _____
- ✓ The _____ of salvation
- ✓ The sword of the _____ which is the _____ of God

E	E	D	B	S	E	E	H	P	D	T	E	A	P
E	R	E	L	A	D	S	R	B	L	B	S	O	T
P	T	D	R	O	W	S	R	T	E	A	E	R	T
B	H	E	S	E	E	E	P	E	I	T	L	E	B
T	E	P	E	R	E	P	S	M	H	I	C	T	H
H	E	S	O	L	I	H	F	L	S	H	A	E	E
A	E	L	H	H	H	L	A	E	T	S	L	F	L
P	T	L	S	A	E	P	I	H	T	O	L	L	B
R	E	Y	A	R	P	L	T	S	I	R	R	T	I
P	E	S	U	I	E	T	H	S	R	S	U	A	B
Y	T	E	C	A	E	P	A	P	S	O	I	T	L
E	T	A	L	P	T	S	A	E	R	B	E	H	H
I	O	S	P	I	R	I	T	T	B	P	R	I	A
D	P	E	O	Y	Y	S	B	E	R	H	A	B	T

Read – Ephesians 6:17-18

It is often noted that the “sword of the Spirit” is the only offensive piece of all the armor of God. Everything else is defensive. Why is that?

In verse 18 Paul gives us a way of praying. “Pray at _____ in the _____ with every _____ and request and stay _____ with all _____ and intercession for all the saints.”

Today’s Takeaway: If we fight spiritual battles spiritually, with the full armor of God, we will have victory. Without it we are defenseless.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:

May 28, 2023

Avoiding a Critical Spirit

Scripture Study: Numbers 12:1-15



There are many causes of a critical spirit, but in our context political differences has to be one of the biggest instigators. We all have an idea of how things should be done and we all care deeply about the good of the nation. If you couple political passion with instant, and easy ways of verbalizing disagreement then you are well on your way to a critical attitude. No doubt, there are mature, sensible ways to communicate differences, and we should, but so often diverse ideas turns into something ugly and counterproductive.

To complicate matters more, social media provides a forum where discontentment and criticism of others can be shared instantly without passing through the filter of time and cooler minds. Plus, the 24 hour news cycle and news outlets with heavily biased perspectives fuel the flames of criticality by distorting headlines to make them provocative and use half-truth and mistruth to fan the flames. Sadly, this has led to many, many otherwise mature Christians to possess a caustic attitude and lose their testimony to others.

Context: The children of Israel are in the midst of their exodus from Egypt. Moses has been firmly established as their leader, but more importantly, Moses has displayed an incredible relationship with God, Himself. He's more than just a leader of people, He is God's man. Aaron is Moses' brother, and the priest of Israel and Miriam is Moses' older sister. They are both part of the leadership of God's people but become jealous of Moses' connection with God and his display of gifts.

Today's Focus: A critical spirit is not of the Lord and creates hardships for everyone involved.

BIBLE STUDY

Read – Numbers 12:1-3

Based solely on the testimony of verses 1-2, how would you describe Aaron and Miriam's personality? _____

How does God's word describe Moses' personality in verse 3?

Go back and read the beginning of Numbers 11. Where do you think Aaron and Miriam got their bad attitude from? _____

Read – Numbers 12:4-9

God clearly sets Moses apart from any other person, including any prophets. Is it possible that this recognition is part of what led Miriam and Aaron to be critical? _____

Do we have a tendency to be critical of those in positions of special authority or leadership? Why is this? _____

God points out that Aaron and Miriam did not hesitate to speak critically regarding Moses (V9), even though God had elevated Moses to a position above all the others. Why were they so emboldened?

Read – Numbers 12:10-15

Given the testimony of verse 10 it is not hard to see that a critical spirit can lead to separation from God. Should this make us reconsider taking on a critical attitude of others? _____

The people couldn't move on until Miriam finished her time outside the gate. Have you considered that our critical attitudes can affect others as well? _____

Today's Takeaway: A critical spirit is unbecoming of a Christian and their testimony and may negatively affect those around us.

Study Notes or Prayer Reminders:



Don Korreckt
2/15/1937 – 1/27/2023

This Sunday School Student Guide is dedicated to the memory of Don Korreckt. Don served God & His people at Waynedale Baptist Church for over 40 years. Don served as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, leader of sports evangelism, finance team, VBS teacher, & anything else that needed to be done. Don's faith, friendship, encouragement & optimism, generosity, & servant's heart will be sorely missed in the sanctuary, classrooms, & hallways of this place.

**His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your master.' –
Matthew 25:23**